

# DRIVE YOUR PLOW OVER THE BONES OF THE DEAD

28 MAR -  
10 MAY



From the novel by  
**Olga Tokarczuk**  
Adapted and Directed  
by **Eamon Flack**



**BELVOIR ST  
THEATRE**

# DRIVE YOUR PLOW OVER THE BONES OF THE DEAD

**RUN TIME:** 3 hours & 15 min incl. 2x15min intervals

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## **WARNING**

This production contains haze, herbal and e-cigarette smoke, and occasional total blackouts (yes, proper total).

There are references to animal cruelty and hunting, as well as some onstage violence. There's also strong language, drinking, and drug use including one particularly enthusiastic joint.

So, it's fair to call this one "mature themed."

If you have any questions or concerns, our Box Office team will happily assist.

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Supported by **Artistic Director's Circle**  
Creative Development supported by  
**John and Libby Fairfax**

# DRIVE YOUR PLOW OVER THE BONES OF THE DEAD

## CAST

**Paula Arundell**

Mrs President & Ensemble

**Marco Chiappi**

Commandant & Ensemble

**Gareth Davies**

Black Coat & Ensemble

**Emma Diaz**

Good News & Ensemble

**Alan Dukes**

Wnetzac & Ensemble

**Meg Hyeronimus**

Rehearsal Stand-In

**Nadie Kammallaweera**

The Gray lady & Ensemble

**Arky Michael**

Oddball & Ensemble

**Colin Moody**

Bigfoot & Ensemble

**Daniel R. Nixon**

Dizzy & Ensemble

**Pamela Rabe**

Mrs Duszejko

**Ziggy Resnick**

Policewoman & Ensemble

**Bruce Spence**

Oddball & Ensemble

## CREATIVES

Based on the novel by

**Olga Tokarzcuk**

Adapted and Directed by

**Eamon Flack**

Set Designer

**Romanie Harper**

Lighting Designer

**Morgan Moroney**

Costume Designer

**Ella Butler**

Composer &

Sound Designer

**Alyx Dennison**

Associate Sound Designer

**Madeleine Picard**

Movement Director

**Charmene Yap**

Fight Director

**Nigel Poulton**

Assistant Director

**Ayah Tayeh**

Stage Manager

**Luke McGettigan**

Assistant Stage Manager

**Jasmine Power**

Assistant Stage Manager

**Paisley Williams**

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we share our stories. We also pay our respects to the Elders past and present, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Paula Arundell

Cover photography by

**Daniel Boud**

Rehearsal photography by

**Brett Boardman**



Eamon Flack

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

EAMON FLACK

I once had an unforgettable conversation with Hannah Gadsby in which she pointed out - and I'm paraphrasing here - that in the history of art it's often women and queer artists who are the first to break open new forms and new possibilities, which then get picked up and made "great" by the "greats".

Tokarczuk and her hero Mrs Duszejko are both such revolutionaries, striking out for ways to make strange and unexpected descriptions of reality into new truths. Both are fighting for new, odd, unlikely, unexpected, overlooked, fragile, incipient possibilities for life and living to be heard and taken seriously.

So too are the brilliant women and queer creatives who have each led this process on their own terms along the way (in reverse alphabetical order by first name):

- Pamela Rabe.
- Romanie Harper - set design.
- Morgan Moroney - lighting.
- Ella Butler - costumes.
- Charmene Yap - movement.
- Alyx Dennison - music and sound.

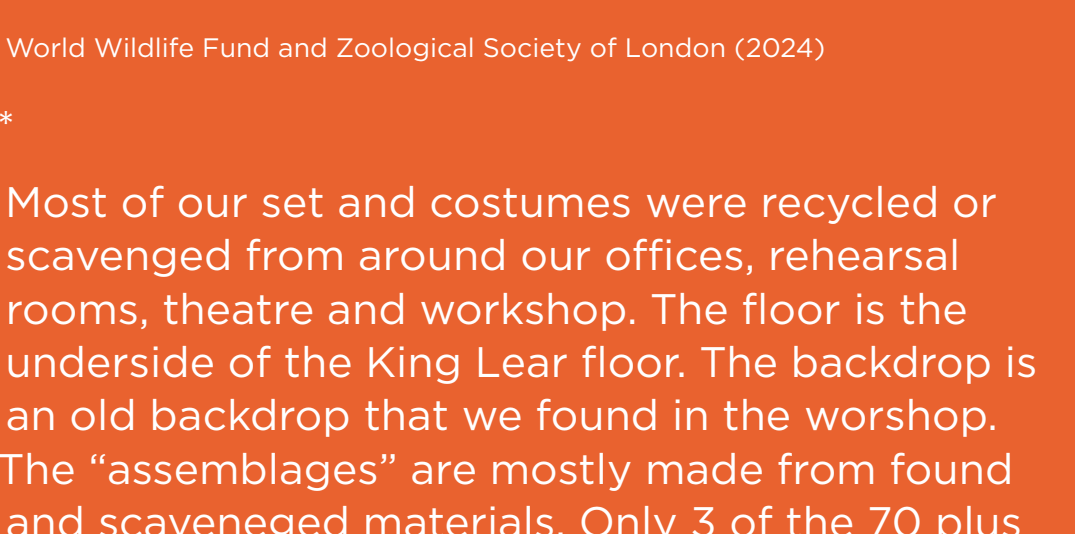
\*  
From [Olga Tokarczuk's Nobel Prize Lecture](#)

The world is a fabric we weave daily on the great looms of information, discussions, films, books, gossip, little anecdotes. Today the purview of these looms is enormous - thanks to the internet, almost everyone can take place in the process, taking responsibility and not, lovingly and hatefully, for better and for worse. When this story changes, so does the world. In this sense, the world is made of words.

How we think about the world and - perhaps even more importantly - how we narrate it have a massive significance, therefore. A thing that happens and is not told ceases to exist and perishes. This is a fact well known to not only historians, but also (and perhaps above all) to every stripe of politician and tyrant. He who has and weaves the story is in charge.

Today our problem lies - it seems - in the fact that we do not yet have ready narratives not only for the future, but even for a concrete now, for the ultra-rapid transformations of today's world. We lack the language, we lack the points of view, the metaphors, the myths and new fables. Yet we do see frequent attempts to harness rusty, anachronistic narratives that cannot fit the future to imaginaries of the future, no doubt on the assumption that an old something is better than a new nothing, or trying in this way to deal with the limitations of our own horizons. In a word, we lack new ways of telling the story of the world.

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World Wildlife Fund and Zoological Society of London (2024)

\*

Most of our set and costumes were recycled or scavenged from around our offices, rehearsal rooms, theatre and workshop. The floor is the underside of the King Lear floor. The backdrop is an old backdrop that we found in the workshop. The "assemblages" are mostly made from found and scavenged materials. Only 3 of the 70 plus costumes were bought new - the rest are from stock or are recycled op-shop finds. (Keep a close eye for the electrical tape on the police uniforms.)

\*

Here's Meghan O'Gieblyn on Simone Weil, which to my mind describes something of the genius of Tokarczuk's novel:

"In her 1939 essay on the *Iliad*, Simone Weil argued that art has lost the tragic gaze of the Greek epic... Everyone, without exception, will be subject to misfortune. Everyone, without exception, will experience divine grace, which is not a special dispensation but "spreads over the whole human race, impartial as sunlight." The genius of the *Iliad*, Weil wrote, is that amid all the violence and suffering, "nothing precious is scorned." Even as the poem reflects the blind brutality of the pagan cosmos, it pauses over instances of beauty, heroism, and love, not because these qualities cancel out the suffering or redeem it but simply because they too are a part of the world that deserves attention. Weil believed that European writers would never again produce a work of genius until "they learn that there is no refuge from fate."

And here's Weil herself, from her *Iliad* essay:

"The strong are, as a matter of fact, never absolutely strong, nor are the weak absolutely weak, but neither is aware of this. They have in common a refusal to believe that they both belong to the same species: the weak see no relation between themselves and the strong, and vice versa."

(What happens when the weak realise they are not absolutely weak? When the strong realise they are not absolutely strong?)

"These men, wielding power, have no suspicion of the fact that the consequences of their deeds will at length come home to them - they too will bow the neck in their turn... But at the time their own destruction seems impossible to them. For they do not see that the force in their possession is only a limited quantity; nor do they see their relations with other human beings as a kind of balance between unequal amounts of force."

"To respect life in somebody else when you have had to castrate yourself of all yearning for it demands a truly heartbreaking exertion of the powers of generosity."

\*



Bar-on, Phillips & Milo, The Biomass Distribution on Earth, Animals Australia (2018)

\*

"What are some people evil and nasty?" Boros, Chapter 11.

- Some further answers:
- The gender binary.
  - KPIs.
  - Colonialism.
  - Queues.
  - Auto-immune issues.
  - Driving luxury cars.
  - Driving cars.
  - Algorithms.
  - Social media.
  - Techno-feudalism.
  - The confusion of theory and practice, of ideology and shared life.
  - The Neolithic Revolution.
  - The Peistocene Environment of Evolutionary Adaptedness.
  - Primary-resource based economies.
  - Private school-ism.
  - Taxing labour at a higher rate than capital.
  - The Patriarchy.
  - Fascism.
  - Communism.
  - Centrism.
  - Not being told No.
  - Loneliness.
  - The Cartesian separation of body and mind.
  - The Capitalist alienation of time.
  - Shareholder value maximisation.
  - Debt securitisation.
  - The existence of billionaires.
  - Capitalism in general.
  - Etc.

\*

Death to naturalism!

Death to literalism!

Long live new descriptions of reality!

\*





Ziggy Resnick



Alan Dukes



Marco Chiappi.



Paula Arundell





Bruce Spence



Marco Chiappi, Nadie Kammallaweera & Ziggy Resnick



Charmene Yap



Meg Hyeronimus





Romanie Harper



Morgan Moroney



Bruce Spence & Marco Chiappi



Paula Arundell, Gareth Davies, Marco Chiappi, Colin Moody, Bruce Spence & Alan Dukes



Emma Diaz & her friend Freya



Ella Butler & Eamon Flack

**“I CALCULATE HOROSCOPES.  
WOULD YOU LIKE ONE?  
I CAN DRAW IT UP FOR YOU?”**

**- ACT 1 – DUSZEJKO**

**ZODIAC SIGNS**



Sign	Symbol	Symbol Name	Zodiac Dates	Element	Quality	Celestial Longitude
<b>Aries</b>	♈	The Ram	Mar 21 - Apr 19	Fire	Cardinal	0 - 30 degrees
<b>Taurus</b>	♉	The Bull	Apr 20 - May 20	Earth	Fixed	30 - 60 degrees
<b>Gemini</b>	♊	The Twins	May 21 - Jun 20	Air	Mutable	60 - 90 degrees
<b>Cancer</b>	♋	The Crab	Jun 21 - Jul 22	Water	Cardinal	90 - 120 degrees
<b>Leo</b>	♌	The Lion	Jul 23 - Aug 22	Fire	Fixed	120 - 150 degrees
<b>Virgo</b>	♍	The Virgin	Aug 23 - Sep 22	Earth	Mutable	150 - 180 degrees
<b>Libra</b>	♎	The Balance	Sep 23 - Oct 22	Air	Cardinal	180 - 210 degrees
<b>Scorpio</b>	♏	The Scorpion	Oct 23 - Nov 21	Water	Fixed	210 - 240 degrees
<b>Sagittarius</b>	♐	The Archer	Nov 22 - Dec 21	Fire	Mutable	240 - 270 degrees
<b>Capricorn</b>	♑	The Goat	Dec 22 - Jan 19	Earth	Cardinal	270 - 300 degrees
<b>Aquarius</b>	♒	Water Bearer	Jan 20 - Feb 18	Air	Fixed	300 - 330 degrees
<b>Pisces</b>	♓	The Fishes	Feb 19 - Mar 20	Water	Mutable	330 - 360 degrees

**GLOSSARY**

**Cardinal** - the initiators of the zodiac, marking the start of each season.

**Fixed** - The stabilisers of the zodiac, occurring in the middle of seasons.

**Mutable** - The adaptable “chameleons” of the zodiac, appearing at the end of each season.

**Celestial Longitude** - measures placement in space by reference to the 360 degree of the zodiac.

# WILDLIFE CARE: A QUICK GUIDE

Animals sit at the heart of *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, challenging how we value their lives. Here are a few ways you can help care for and protect them in your own world from beyond the stage into real-world action.

## HOW YOU CAN PROTECT WILDLIFE



### ADOPT / FOSTER

check out the local organisations below on how to meet a new member of your family.



### DONATE

Find a wildlife cause that sits close to your heart and give back.



### VOLUNTEER

Find opportunities at wildlife centres, this can look like replanting local eco-systems, looking after sick or injured animals and more.



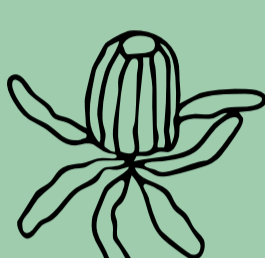
### BUILD A BACKYARD BEE HOTEL

Bees are endangered, help by providing essential habitats in your garden.



### KEEP YOUR CATS INSIDE AT NIGHT

Cats like to hunt at night, protect endangered native animals by keeping your cuddly friend inside when the sun goes down.



### PLANT NATIVE FLORA IN YOUR BACKYARD

Planting local flowers help feed pollinating insects.



### BECOME A CITIZEN SCIENTIST

Record sightings of bugs in iNaturalist to help scientists better understand how our bugs are doing.

## PET ADOPTION

From rescue to re-homing, these Sydney organisations connect you with animals ready for a second chance at life.



**Blacktown Animal Rehoming Centre ( BARC )**



**Doggie Rescue**



**Pet Rescue**



**Maggie's Rescue**

**Maggie's Rescue**

## WHO TO CONTACT

If you come across an animal that is in distress, injured or want to report animal endangerment, this is who to contact in Sydney.



**RSPCA NSW**  
(02) 9770 7555



**WIRES**  
1300 094 737



**Sydney Wildlife Rescue**  
(02) 9413 4300

**Your local vet**

**Your local vet**  
Any local vet clinic can provide emergency care for wildlife.



**BELVOIR ST  
THEATRE**

# 2026 SEASON



## DEAR SON

Letters of love by First Nations fathers and sons

**8 - 25 Jan**

## AMPLIFIED

Sheridan Harbridge as Chrissy Amphlett

**29 Jan - 8 Feb**

## A MIRROR

A smart new play from London about art and power

**21 Feb - 22 Mar**

## DRIVE YOUR PLOW OVER THE BONES OF THE DEAD

Pamela Rabe and Eamon Flack take on the  
Nobel Prize-winner's whodunnit

**28 Mar - 10 May**

## THE BIRDS

Paula Arundell goes wild in a new take on Daphne du Maurier's classic

**16 May - 7 Jun**

## THE JUNGLE AND THE SEA

S. Shakthidharan and Eamon Flack's acclaimed play returns

**11 Jul - 2 Aug**

## THE BOOK OF EVERYTHING

One of the all-time most-loved Belvoir shows is back!

**22 Aug - 20 Sep**

## A ROOM WITH A VIEW

E. M. Forster's classic tale of living boldly, together

**3 Oct - 1 Nov**

## THE COCONUT CHILDREN

Vivian Pham's breakout novel comes to the stage

**21 Nov - 20 Dec**

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The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC,  
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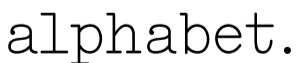
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Led by Belvoir's Artistic Director Eamon Flack, the **Artistic Director's Circle** supports an iconic Belvoir show each year; *Into the Woods* in 2023, *August: Osage County* in 2024 and *King Lear* in 2025. In 2026, the **Artistic Director's Circle** is supporting *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*.

Patty Akopiantz &  
Justin Punch  
Sophie & Stephen Allen  
The Balnaves Foundation  
Anne Britton  
Jillian Broadbent  
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Andrew Denton  
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Cathy Cameron  
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Prof. Orli Wargon OAM

Ingrid Kaiser  
Ian Learmonth &  
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Judy Thomson  
The WeirAnderson  
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Shemara Wikramanayake  
& Ed Gilmartin  
Kim Williams AM &  
Catherine Dovey  
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If you are interested in joining the **Artistic Director's Circle**, please call our Development Team on (02) 8396 6219 or email [development@belvoir.com.au](mailto:development@belvoir.com.au)

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